

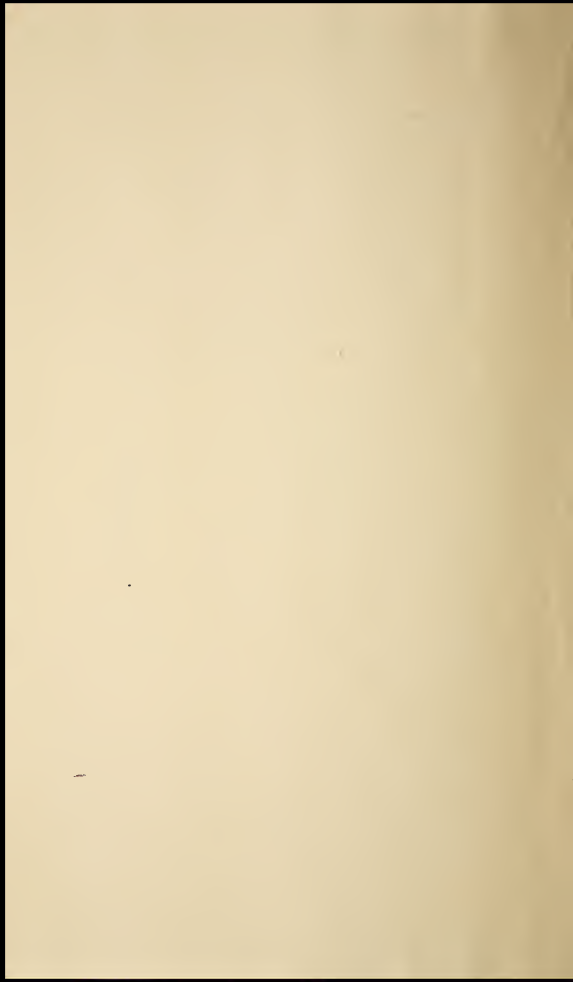
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MONTEZUMA	CAPTAIN PIPE	KEOKUK
GUATIMOTZIN	LOGAN	SACAGAWEA
POWHATAN	CORNPLANTER	BENITO JUAREZ
POCAHONTAS	JOSEPH BRANT	MANGUS
SAMOSSET	RED JACKET	COLORADAS
MASSASOIT	LITTLE TURTLE	LITTLE CROW
KING PHILIP	YACUMSEH	SITTING BULL
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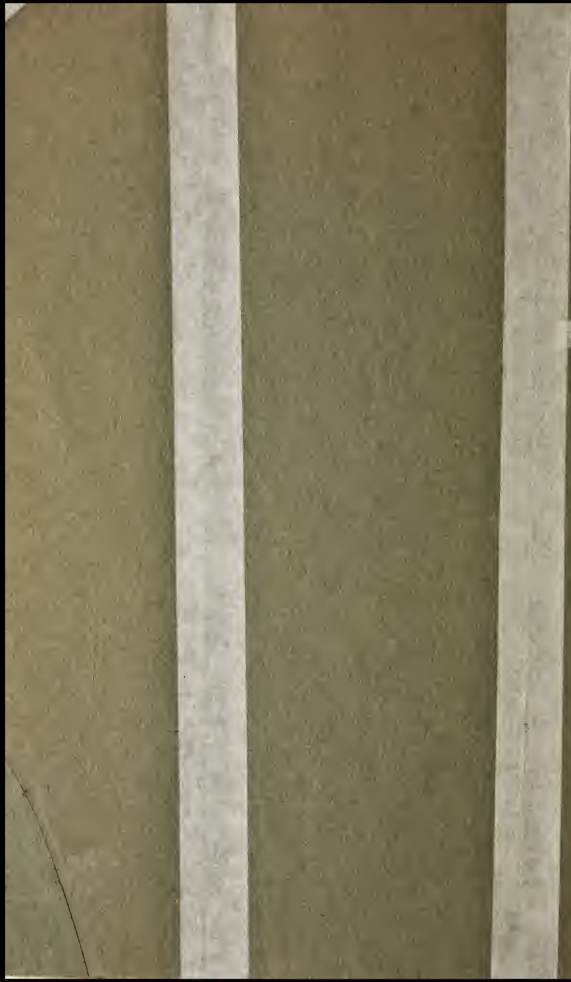


**The Story of My Capture
and Escape During the
Minnesota Indian Mass-
acre of 1862.**

By MRS. HELEN MAR TARBLE.



Price 50 Cents



THE STORY
—OF MY—
CAPTURE AND ESCAPE
DURING THE
MINNESOTA INDIAN MASSACRE
OF 1862

WITH HISTORICAL NOTES, DESCRIPTIONS OF PIONEER
LIFE, AND SKETCHES AND INCIDENTS OF THE GREAT
OUTBREAK OF THE SIOUX OR DAKOTA
INDIANS AS I SAW THEM

BY MRS. HELEN M. TARBLE

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MRS. HELEN MAR TARDLE
From a recent photograph

EARLY INDIAN HISTORY OF MINNESOTA

The massacre in Minnesota by the Sioux Indians, in August, 1862, was the most appalling exhibition of Indian treachery and ferocity ever perpetrated. More white people were killed in this massacre than in any other in the history of the country, and yet thousands of people now living in the State have never heard of it. The terrible affair was one of the strongest evidences of the deadly hate engendered among the savages by the white man's taking possession of their hunting grounds and attempting to force them into what we call civilization. As well attempt to make the leopard change his spots or the wild-cat its treacherous ferocity. Such efforts must always prove dismal failures.

To fully understand the causes which led to the terrible massacres of 1832 in Minnesota we must go back to the early history of the country. In 1680 Father Louis Hennepin, a French priest, ascended the upper Mississippi with two white companions, in a canoe. Some Sioux Indians made them prisoners and carried them to their village on the lakes called the Mille Lacs, where they passed some months. Father Hennepin visited and named the Falls of St. Anthony and gave the first authentic knowledge of the country of the upper Mississippi.

In 1766 Jonathan Carver, an American ex-officer in the English service, visited Minnesota and remained here from October of that year to April, 1767. He claimed to have acquired considerable influence over the Indians of this region, and to have made peace between the Sioux and Chippewas, who had long been at war. The Sioux, or Dakota Indians, were then called Nadowessioux by the Chippewas and all other

Indians of the great Algonquin nations. The word Nadowessiou means enemies, and has been gradually shortened to Sioux. But these Indians have always called themselves Dakota, which means allied. When Carver was here the Sioux occupied all the country now in Minnesota from the Falls of St. Anthony to the Iowa line, and on both sides of the "St. Peters," or Minnesota, river from its source to its mouth. The country to the north was held by the Chippewas, who finally drove the Sioux to the west side of the Mississippi. These two tribes were almost constantly at war.

The first treaty between the Americans and the Sioux was made near the mouth of the Minnesota September 23, 1805, by Lieut. Z. M. Pike for the Americans and the Sioux chiefs for the Indians. This was a "treaty of friendship," but the Indians gave to the United States a tract of land nine miles square about the mouth of the Minnesota for which they were paid \$2,000. On this land Fort Snelling was afterwards built.

During the war of 1812 between England and the United States the Sioux were the allies of the English, and after the war it was the policy of our government to secure peace with them. So, July 19, 1815, the first general treaty of "amity and friendship" was negotiated with them, and ever since, from time to time, they have received payments and presents in money and goods.

June 1, 1816, a treaty was concluded at St. Louis between the United States and eight bands of the Sioux, confirming to the United States all cessations or grants of lands previously made to our government by the British, French and Spanish governments within the limits of the United States. No annuities were paid to the Indians for these grants.

In 1837 a treaty was made between the United States and the Medawakanton band of Sioux, by

which the Indians ceded to the United States all their lands on the east side of the Mississippi. This treaty provided for large money payments to the Indians.

July 28, 1851, at Traverse des Sioux, on the Minnesota, the Wahpeton and Sisseton bands of Sioux ceded to the United States all their lands in the Territory of Minnesota and the State of Iowa up to what is now the western boundary of our state—excepting a reservation twenty miles wide, or ten miles wide on either side of the Minnesota, commencing some miles below the mouth of the Yellow Medicine river. August 5 of that year a treaty was concluded at Mendota with the Medawakanton and Wahpakoota bands of Sioux by which the United States obtained the Indian right and title to lands in Iowa and the Territory of Minnesota, except a reservation twenty miles wide—ten miles on either side of the Minnesota river—from a point four miles below Fort Ridgely up to the Sisseton and Wahpeton reservation. The government agreed to pay the four bands mentioned about \$30 per head per annum for fifty years and to spend other vast sums for their “civilization”—to teach them to become farmers, etc.,—as a payment for their lands. Thus all the lands originally owned by the Sioux within Iowa and Minnesota, except the reservations described, were ceded to the United States and opened to white settlement. The amount the Indians were to receive for their lands aggregated about \$3,000,000, or a little over ten cents an acre.

The Wahpeton and Sisseton bands were known as the Upper Sioux, because their reservation was the farthest up the Minnesota river, and their agency was at the mouth of the Yellow Medicine. The Medawakanton and Wahpakoota bands were called the Lower Sioux, as their reservation was the lower, and their agency was about six miles below the Redwood

river and called Redwood. The Wahpetons occupied the eastern end of the upper reservation, and the Sissetons had their villages on the western end, about Big Stone Lake, Lake Traverse, and across the line in Dakota. A few of the Lower Sioux were on the Yellow Medicine, near its mouth; they were under a sub-chief called the Jug, and were of the so-called civilized Indians.

The principal villages of the Lower bands were about the center and at the eastern end of their reservation, on the south side of the Minnesota river. Little Crow, the most noted of the sub-chiefs of the lower bands and the leader of the great outbreak, had his village four miles below the mouth of the Redwood river and two miles west of the Redwood Agency.

In 1858 certain of the Sioux chiefs and "head men" of both bands, in charge of the U. S. agent, Joseph R. Brown, went to Washington and there made another treaty, by the terms of which they ceded to the government the north half (ten miles wide) of their reservation, retaining only that portion on the south side of the Minnesota. For the lands then sold they were to be paid about twenty-five cents per acre, and provision was made for their civilization. A part of their annuities was to be expended in improving their lands, and in furnishing all that would become farmers with 80 acres of land, farm implements, cattle, etc., and helping them to erect dwelling houses for themselves. The Indians were to be paid for all labor they performed and to retain for their own use all they raised.

A large number of Indians availed themselves of the opportunities presented for their improvement. Over 100 of the "farmer" Indians were of the lower bands, many of them belonging to Little Crow's band, and even Little Crow himself became a "civilized" Indian.

The taking from the general fund of the tribe the money necessary to carry out the civilization scheme was always a source of irritation to the "blanket" Indians. This was one of their greatest grievances and they bitterly denounced it. When they became destitute and hungry, they swarmed around the "farmer" Indians, pitched their tepees, and came to stay, living upon their more industrious neighbors. Many a poor "farmer" was eaten out of house and home by these vagabonds, forced to leave his cabin and farm and go to the woods and live in a tepee and subsist his family by hunting, fishing and trapping during the winter. In the spring, when he returned to his little farm, he often found the fences destroyed and the house plundered and injured. He could then put in and cultivate another crop, which, in its turn, was invariably devoured by the blanket fellows the next fall. The heedless, thriftless and shiftless habits of the Sioux are well known, and in part account for the failure to really civilize them.

Before the white traders came the Sioux dressed wholly in skins and furs, but now they almost all wear white men's clothing. In the old times they lived chiefly upon game and fish and wild rice which grew abundantly in the marshes and along the lakes and rivers. Now, forty years after their great outbreak, they live in houses and some of them are comfortably well off, but the majority are lazy and shiftless and very poor.

If the old-time Sioux Indians possessed any noble traits—that is to say, as a tribe—I utterly failed to discover them, after residing among them for years. They were cunning, deceitful and treacherous, and under no circumstances could they be relied on. It has often been asserted by careless and ignorant writers that "an Indian never forgets a kindness." It would be pleasant to

believe this, but if it were true, the bones of so many white victims of their fiendish barbarity would not have bleached on the prairies of Minnesota after the great outbreak of 1862. During that dreadful period many of these red demons, who "never forget a kindness," rose from the humble board, where they had just shared with the kind-hearted pioneer and his family their frugal meal, and bathed their cruel hands in the blood of all that dwelt beneath the hospitable roof and then bore away their gory scalps, as trophies of their demoniac exploits, in triumph to their villages.

It is perhaps proper here to give a brief though correct account of the terrible Sioux outbreak in Minnesota in August, 1862. This, the most horrible and bloodiest incident in Minnesota history, began really on August 17, in the township of Acton, Meeker County, some 35 miles northwest of the Lower Indian Agency, when and where six white persons were murdered. The perpetrators were four young Sioux of what was called the Rice Creek band, because its members had a small village at the mouth of Rice creek on the north side of the Minnesota on land then belonging to the Government. The Rice creek village was nearly opposite to Shakopee's, and many of the inmates were deserters from Shakopee's band, though other bands, even the Wahpetons, were represented among the Rice Creekers. The news of the Acton murders having reached the Lower Indians they broke out on the morning of the 18th of August, and murdered the whites of the surrounding settlements by hundreds. Within five days they had killed more than 800 people, had attacked New Ulm and Fort Ridgely twice each, and had destroyed more than \$1,000,000 worth of property. They extended their depredations from Springfield, Sioux Falls and Lake Shetek on the south, to Glencoe, Hutchinson and Fort Abercrombie on the north. They also murdered as

far west as Big Stone Lake and as far east as the vicinity of St. Peter.

A hastily gathered force of newly recruited U. S. volunteers and State militia, under Ex-Gov. H. H. Sibley, was sent against the hostile savages as soon as possible. There were on August 17, two companies, B and C of the 5th Minnesota Infantry, at Fort Ridgely (near the eastern border of the Lower Reservation) under command respectively of Capt. John S. Marsh and Lieut. T. J. Sheehan. Capt. Marsh was in command of Fort Ridgely, but on hearing of the outbreak at the Lower Agency, on the morning of the 18th, he marched to the relief, but in the afternoon was ambuscaded by the Indians at the ferry over the Minnesota opposite the Agency, and he and 23 of his men perished, the rest of the company being scattered. On being informed of the uprising, Lieut. Sheehan, of Company C, who was on his way to Fort Ripley with his company, returned, after a swift and very hard march, and took command of Fort Ridgely. He had, with the Renville Rangers, all told, about 150 armed men, and in the fort were 300 citizens, some wounded men, women and children, and \$70,000 in gold and silver intended for the Indian payment. New Ulm was defended by the citizens of that place and some volunteers under Judge C. E. Flandrau, of the Supreme Court, who was put in general command. The savages, in overwhelming force, made two separate attacks on New Ulm and on Fort Ridgely, but were beaten off on each occasion by the brave defenders, who realized that they must fight to the death. The Indians also attacked Hutchinson, where the citizens bravely and successfully defended themselves. Other settlements in the large timbered district known as the Big Woods were attacked. The settlement at Lake Shetek, in Murray County, was also assaulted by Indians who had always been friendly and of whom no fear was felt, and the people were either killed or

taken captive, except a few who escaped. At the Yellow Medicine Agency the employes and others connected with the station in any way, including traders and missionaries, made their escape under the leadership and guidance of Am-pa-tu-to-kicha, or Other Day, a full-blood Sioux Indian, who had been converted to Christianity and was a "cut hair" and farmer Indian.

The successful defenses of Fort Ridgely, New Ulm, Hutchinson and Fort Abercrombie discouraged and disheartened the Indians more than the success of their raids of murder and plunder had encouraged them. When Sibley's forces reached the hostile country the Indians, on Sept. 2, succeeded in surrounding and besieging a force of 150 men under Maj. Joseph R. Brown, on the Birch Coulee, in Renville County, killing and mortally wounding 24 and severely wounding more than 50. The command was rescued by Gen. Sibley, who marched to its aid from Fort Ridgely, fourteen miles away, and drove away the Indian army. In due time, as soon as he could make his arrangements, Gen. Sibley moved against the Indians and in the battle of Wood Lake, Sept. 23, wholly defeated them and drove the hostiles under Little Crow from the state. Three days later about 200 white and mixed-blood prisoners, nearly all of whom were women and children, were restored to the whites at a place called Camp Release, and soon after several hundred Indian men, a large number of whom had been hostile, either surrendered or were taken prisoners. Nearly 400 of these characters were tried by a military commission for murder, rape, robbery, etc., and 306 of them were convicted of various crimes and sentenced to be hung. But President Lincoln commuted the sentences of all of the condemned but 38 and would not allow any to be hung except those convicted on good evidence of murder, rape, robbery, or attempted murder. Those

Indians who had merely fought in the battles against the whites, or been guilty of lesser acts of hostility, were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment at the Federal military prison at Davenport, Iowa, on the Mississippi opposite Rock Island, Ill., where was then a large U. S. prison, with thousands of Confederate inmates.

As to the cause of the outbreak, nothing has ever been advanced but theories. The facts do not furnish an excuse, or even an explanation, which is satisfactory. Ever since the treaty of Traverse des Sioux, Mo., in 1815—forty-seven years before—the Sioux had been friendly to the whites and loyal to their treaty obligations. Only two whites had been killed by them, and one of these was shot by mistake. The murderer of the other was tried and hung at St. Paul, his victim being a woman. The outbreak was as sudden and unexpected as a thunderbolt from a clear sky. No wonder so many people refused to believe the first news of the Indian uprising and so lost their lives because of their misplaced trust and confidence in the savages.

It has often been stated that the delay in payment of the Indian annuities for 1862 caused the outbreak. It is true that the payment should have been made in June and that the money did not come until August, and that the delay caused great worry and dissatisfaction among the Indians. But the Upper Indians, who were the most dissatisfied at the delay, and who made demonstrations against the Yellow Medicine Agency, broke open the warehouse, etc., took but little part in the outbreak. The Lower Indians, who made but little protest against the delay, rose almost to a man against the whites, and it was these Indians, who had made but little complaint of any sort, that perpetrated by far the greater number of the massacres and other outrages.

The Indians were almost without exception friendly towards the whites. They never made any serious complaints or objections to the way they were treated. Their annuity money had been paid regularly; the Government had built houses and done a great deal for them besides; the traders sold them goods on credit and at reasonable prices fixed by the Government, and also paid them well for their furs and skins; the white settlers in the adjoining country were friendly to the Indians and often helped them, and between the settlers and some of the Indians the relations were most cordial and intimate, like those of near neighbors and good friends. The only grievance the Indians seemed to have against the whites was against the Government, and that was because the annuity payment of 1862 was delayed a few weeks. Yet they had sense enough to know that the settlers, their white neighbors, were not to blame for this delay, and they did not attempt to hold them responsible. But when the outbreak came they fell upon their unsuspecting white neighbors and friends, whom they knew to be innocent of any wrong against them, and butchered them in cold blood and under the most horrible circumstances. Why did they do so?

The only answer, that seems reasonable, to this question is, that the massacre was merely an expression and demonstration of the savagery and barbarism existing in every Sioux Indian. There was an ingrained and fixed hostility among these savages to any restraint, to any control, to any work, and to any of the other habits and customs of civilization, except drinking whisky. As I have stated, many of the Minnesota Sioux had partially adopted the ways of white men, but the majority scorned to change their old customs and mode of life and had nothing but contempt for their brethren who had cut their hair and put on white men's clothes and were doing white men's work. Yet during the outbreak a majority of

these farmer Indians were as bad as the blanket Indians—the uncivilized and barbarous—and perpetrated as many cruel and bloody atrocities.

That summer the Indians had been quarreling among themselves for one cause and another, and were much distracted. They were far more angry at one another than at the whites. Then the delay in the payment and the sudden refusal of the traders to trust some of them any longer caused a little worry and denunciation of the government. While they were in this condition of mind suddenly an incident occurred which was like throwing a lighted match into a powder magazine. This was the killing of six persons in the township of Acton, Meeker County, 35 miles northeast of the Lower Agency, by four young reckless Indians from the Rice Creek band. The killing was wholly unprovoked and unpremeditated. These young men had gone over to the Big Woods to hunt. On Sunday, August 17 near the house of a settler named Robinson Jones, one of them found some hen's eggs in a nest in a fence corner. He was carrying them off when a companion remonstrated, saying that the eggs belonged to the white man, who would make trouble for them over the loss. A quarrel arose and the one who took the eggs said the other was a coward and afraid of the white man. To show how brave they all were they agreed to go to the house and kill the white man. They went and the result was that they killed six persons. They reached their camp that night and went over to Shakopee's camp and told what they had done. Blood had been shed. The Indians smelled it and with their tiger-like dispositions the smell inflamed them to madness. At once they cried out for war against the whites and hundreds of them set out before daybreak, to kill and burn and plunder. The excitement increased until all the Lower Indians were on the war path. The Upper Indians would doubt-

less have been engaged had there been an understanding and concerted action between them and their brethren of the lower bands. As it was many of the Upper Indians took part in the uprising before it was suppressed.

The main cause of the outbreak, in my opinion, was the natural bloodthirsty disposition of the Indians which was aroused by the killing of the six persons in Acton township. Many of them were opposed to the control exercised over them by the whites, which was civilizing them and making them self-supporting, and they had some feeling in the matter, but they did not engage in the massacres with any more relish than did those who had no grievance against the whites at all.

MY EXPERIENCE DURING THE OUTBREAK.

Here I will relate a portion of my experiences in the great Indian outbreak, together with some items of my personal history which are necessary to a full and proper understanding of the story.

I was born in Waukesha County, Wis., August 27, 1843. My parents were Thomas J. and Laura Paddock, both natives of Vermont. October 23, 1856, when I was but little more than thirteen years of age, I married James Carrothers, who was thirteen years my senior. In the spring of 1857 we went to Winona where my husband, who was a carpenter by trade, had a contract to build a flouring mill, which I think was the first mill of the kind built there. When the mill was finished we returned to Wisconsin to visit my parents, where we remained until February. Then we returned to Winona.

In April my oldest sister and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Kentner, came on their way "out west" to procure land. We concluded to go with them and at once started. As we had no team or wagon we loaded what we had—which was my husband's tool

chest—into their wagon. When we got into Olmsted County we camped one night near a house and the man came out to see us and told us it was so wet and the roads so muddy that we could not get through, and that we had better stay over with him a week. He said we could live in his granary, which we did, and I made my bed in a bin of wheat. The next day my husband and brother-in-law went out hunting. They stopped at a house for a drink and the man, a Mr. Fred Postere, wanted a barn built; so my husband took the contract and commenced to work on the barn next day, while I remained with my sister.

After a week we started again on our journey, leaving my husband to finish his work. We found the roads still very muddy, as it had been a very wet spring. The first night we camped in a side street of Mantorville, the county seat of Dodge County. The next morning we started on and found the roads getting worse, and we only made a journey of two miles that day and camped at a little town called Sacramento. The next day we made about three miles and camped near Wasioja. There we asked a man which was the better road to take, the ridge road or the prairie road, and he said it did not make much difference; that if we took one we would wish we had taken the other. But before we reached the fork leading to these roads Mr. Kentner, my brother-in-law, rented a farm. When the barn was finished, Mr. Postere's son and my husband took Mr. Postere's ox team, and started west. They camped one night with us and started on.

I remained with my sister, and when their crop was threshed we started after them. We found them in Nicollet County, about ten miles west of St. Peter. They had a log house nearly built on a piece of land which they had taken as a claim. In a short time my husband sold out his interest for a cow and calf and \$50.00 in money. We left Mr. Kentner and my

sister there, as they took a claim, and Mr. Postere and myself and husband started for Blue Earth County, where my husband's brother lived. We stopped at a store in Mankato one day for some provisions and the storekeeper told us there was an Indian reservation just opened up on the north side of the Minnesota river, in Renville County; so we started at once for that section. We passed through New Ulm and Ft. Ridgely and reached the Redwood Agency late in the afternoon. We had a long tedious journey of hardships and privations, seeking our way over the trackless prairie with only Indian trails for roads. Little do the present generation know or imagine what the first pioneers had to endure.

The first night of our arrival at the Lower Agency we found that the Indians had assembled to receive their annuities from the Government. They were having a wild time. Many were maddened with liquor furnished them by the white men, who made immense gains by selling "fire water" to the Indians. They kept up their pow-wow and dance as long as their money lasted. Those only who have heard the blood curdling war-whoop of the wild Indian can imagine the terror I felt, the agony of fear I endured. This was the first large band of Indians I had ever seen. We camped on the land of a Frenchman named LaCroix, who was married to a squaw. They invited me into their house, but I was afraid of the repulsive looking squaw, and I implored my husband to go back with me; I told him I could not stay there. Oh, how I longed for my dear mother. Think of it: I was but a child wife, hundreds of miles from all except my husband that loved or could protect me. My husband seemed to have little patience with my fears. He knew not the horror, the loneliness, the dread of the hideous savages, and the despair that filled my heart. I lay upon the bottom of our covered wagon and cried myself to sleep, only to be awak

ened by the blood curdling whoop of the detested savages. I longed for daylight and resolved at all hazards to return on the morrow, alone, if my husband would not go with me. What were hunger, thirst, weariness, all the dangers and privations of a long perilous journey, compared with the terror I felt of the howling, bloodthirsty savages? But as morning dawned the Indians became quiet and my courage revived with the approach of daylight and things looked more hopeful in the sunshine.

We staid at LaCroix's three days. Mr. LaCroix would come out to the wagon and ask me into his kitchen, but I was afraid of his squaw and did not dare to go. Then they would both come, and she would tell me as best she could to come and cook on her stove. They tried to help and comfort me and were very kind. I felt sorry to go from them, yet I did not get over my fear of that squaw. To me then she was the most repulsive looking woman I ever beheld.

My husband decided on a location of our home on Beaver Creek, in Renville County, one-half mile south of the present site of Beaver Falls. We were the first white family that took up a homestead in that district, and the following fall and winter I spent many days and nights alone. We lived on wild meat—that is, when we could get it—but for weeks and months I ate little else but potatoes and salt, while working every day from earliest dawn until dusk, opening up our farm. My husband and Mr. Postere went to chopping logs for our house, and I took the ox team, which belonged to Mr. Postere, and hauled the logs to the building place. We lived out of doors and slept in our wagon until my husband built our house. When I had hauled all of the logs to the building place, Mr. Postere took his team and returned to his home in Olmsted County. I worked and tugged, lifted and hewed, and did much of the

work of building our house. Husband hewed the logs into puncheons, or slabs, for the floor, and did it very nicely. He made the roof of bark. I was very proud of that house. I had done my full share in building it, and then it was the first house I had ever owned.

My husband succeeded in obtaining employment at the Indian Agency, doing carpenter work, in building houses for the Indians who consented to become farmers. At first he would be away a few days, then a week and after awhile he would be away a month or more at a time. During these long absences of my husband I became well acquainted with the Indians, who were very kind and friendly to me. There were no white people anywhere around us for miles, except the few who lived at the Agency, and I very seldom saw any of them. I was away out in the wilderness with no human beings near save the Indians. They were around my house at all times day or night.

The Indians had a queer way of living. They lived in "tepees," or wigwams, which were of uniform size, about 12 feet in diameter on the ground, with a door about three feet high; that is, merely a parting of the cloth or hides, of which the tepee was composed. Some were made of canvass, but most of them were of tanned buffalo hides. After a heavy rain, if their floors, which were of Mother Earth, were wet, they would go out and pull grass and sprinkle on it to absorb the water. The squaws took great pride in ornamenting their heads and hair. They usually parted the hair in the middle of the forehead, plaited it into two braids, and tied the ends firmly with buckskin strings on which were strung three large glass beads. Then they would paint a bright red streak on the forehead where the hair was parted. Many of them had four or five holes in the rim of each ear from which hung ornaments of all

kinds. The Indians also took great pride in decorating themselves with feathers, ornaments, paints, etc. The dress of the men was simply a shirt, breech-clout, leggings and moccasins; also a blanket.

Their living was simple and laborsaving. They mixed bread in a pan by stirring flour into warm water with a little tallow and salaratus. They then took the dough out of the pan, which they turned bottom side up on the ground, placed the dough on it, patted it flat, cut it in small pieces and fried it in tallow. Potatoes were usually roasted in the hot embers of the camp fire. Beefsteak was put across two sticks over the blaze without salting and in a few minutes was done. Tripe was a favorite dish and they were quick in preparing it. The intestines were removed, then drawn through between the thumb and finger, the contents squeezed out, and, without washing, the tripe was broiled and prepared Indian style.

In disposing of their dead they wrapped the body in blankets and placed it on a scaffold made of poles about five feet above the ground. In a wooded country the scaffold was placed on branches of low trees. In caring for the papcoses, they were fastened on a piece of board about eight inches wide, with a foot rest, ornamented with net work at the head made of willow twigs. They were wrapped to the board with their arms straight down by their sides. When they went to sleep in warm weather, they were placed outside of the tepees in nearly an erect position.

Naturally I began to drop into their ways and learned their language. My home was only a few miles from one of their big villages, and we visited back and forth. When I could talk with them in their own language they seemed to think I belonged to them. They would at any time give me a share of what they had to eat, and often I would go to their camp and listen to their war adventures.

On November 21st, 1858, when I was fifteen years

and three months old, my first child was born, at the house of John Mooer, a half breed. My only attendants were two squaws. When my baby girl was one week old my husband came and took me home in a sled. In crossing the creek one of the runners broke through the ice and both baby and I were dumped into the creek. I was much frightened, as I had heard my mother tell of the great danger of taking cold at such a time. I named my baby Althea; she has long been a mother herself and lives in Minneapolis.

I should doubtless have been spared all further trouble in this world but for the wonderful skill of the principal Indian "medicine man." He had become interested in me, a pale face, able to talk to him in his own language. He used to take me with him to gather roots and herbs and wild flowers and barks, and he would explain their medicinal qualities. I was a ready and willing pupil. Remember, I was there in the wilderness without books, papers or even people of my own race. I was delighted to learn from him, and he seemed to take great pleasure in instructing me in the mysteries of how to select and how to use the herbs, etc., and how to compound the remedies he used, and which certainly were wondrously effective. I little dreamed when helping him prepare his horrid, nasty messes, as I at first used to consider them, that they would not only save the lives of my babies and my own, but in later years help many of my friends when all the wisdom of the white doctor and all other remedies failed. Under the medicine man's treatment neither baby nor I was any worse for our soaking in the ice water of the creek.

Mr. Carrothers left me the next day after the upset in the creek, and started to St. Peter for provisions, as he could get them much cheaper there than at the Agency. While he was gone, thanks to

the influence of the medicine man, the Indians came every day, bringing me game, milk, corn and doing everything they could for my comfort. The squaws chopped and carried in wood, for my house was very cold and I had to sit close to the stove with my baby wrapped in a blanket which one of the squaws gave me. Some of the Indians would come every day and taking a big pipe and filling it with kinnikinnick (or dried red willow bark), they would pass it around and in turn hand it to me. To please them I would at first make believe to take a whiff, until after a time I got so I could smoke and talk as fast as they could. This greatly pleased them and they provided me with an outfit consisting of a long stem pipe and a calico sack full of kinnikinnick, a flint and a piece of punk. Punk is a peculiar kind of very dry wood easily set on fire. When steel is struck against a piece of flint the sparks ignite the punk, a small piece of which is used in lighting the pipe. Always on leaving they would look to see if I had enough kinnikinnick to last until they would come again.

The next summer I put in a garden. My husband worked at the Agency. Late in July David Carrothers, my brother-in-law, and family and a Mr. Henderson and wife came from Blue Earth County and lived with me. The Indians were very fond of my little girl and named her Chasio. They would come up back of the house and call her and she would run to meet them and they would hug and kiss her. We would frequently go to their tepees. We were very happy and knew no fear. Before this the land had been surveyed and was rapidly being settled.

Nothing of importance happened until June, 1862, when the money which the Government had agreed to pay the Indians for their land was delayed on account of the War of the Rebellion. The Indians could not understand the delay and talked very an-

grily about it. Every one tried to explain to them the reason. The Indians claimed their squaws and papooses were starving. In the latter part of July they broke open the Government warehouse at the Upper Agency and carried out some flour. Some of the settlers were terribly frightened, but I was not. I was practically an adopted child of the Sioux and had the special protection of their great medicine man. Then, too, I had nursed them in their sickness, dwelt with them in their camp, ate with them, smoked with them, and supplied them with meals when they came hungry to my house. For months when I first came among them I must have starved but for their bringing me food. I had no cause to fear any of them. The troops from Ft. Ridgely were at the Upper Agency under Lieut. T. J. Sheehan, of Company C, 5th Minnesota, and they soon suppressed the trouble. But some of the blanket Indians kept the matter in agitation. The Indians warned me that they were going to kill all the white settlers, but I did not believe or give any heed to the warning at all.

I know that the autumn of 1861 closed very unfavorably. Crops were light, especially with the Upper Sioux; they had little or nothing. Early in the fall of 1861 Agent Galbraith made a requisition on the Indian Department for \$5,000 out of the Relief and Destitute Indian fund. From the middle of December, 1861, to April, 1862, many of the Indians would have perished of starvation but for government aid. But in the latter part of the summer of 1862, all danger was really over.

Tuesday, August 12, 1862, a Republican County Convention of the citizens of Renville County was held at our house, and Mr. Carrothers, my husband, was chosen delegate to the Congressional Convention, to be held at Owatonna on the 19th. On the morning of the 17th he left home to attend the con-

vention. The same day a company of recruits for the Union army, called the Renville Rangers, that had been recruited in our county, chiefly about the agencies, and in which were several Indian mixed bloods, left Ft. Ridgeley, by way of St. Peter. On the morning of August 18 there was but one company of soldiers (Company B, Fifth Minnesota, under Capt. John S. Marsh), at Ft. Ridgely, a little more than 20 miles from my home, to protect the settlers in the county against 3,000 Indian warriors.

On the 17th, when my husband left home, I was at the home of our neighbor, Mr. S. R. Henderson, taking care of his wife, who was very sick from inflammation of the bowels (or perhaps it might be called appendicitis now), and needed constant attention. She had been treated by the Agency physician, Dr. Humphrey, but he had given up all hope of her recovery. Before calling in Dr. Humphrey she told me that she had tried a number of medicines, but that none of them had helped her.

Mr. Henderson and his wife had a strong prejudice against the old Indian medicine man, and never missed a chance to abuse and ridicule him, calling him a "crazy old humbug and fraud," much to the old man's annoyance; but now, all other relief failing them, they most pitifully begged his help. The old man made as the condition of his helping her, that I alone should do the nursing; no one else was to interfere. He had taught me a great many things, but I believe that many of his ideas, which I now more than ever firmly believe in, were very repugnant to those of Mr. and Mrs. Henderson. I know that, while they are ignorant in many things in which civilized people are thoroughly posted, the medicine men and certain other old Indians better understood—or at least they better heeded—certain natural laws.

The medicine man was confident that he could restore Mrs. Henderson to health, and I believe he would have succeeded had not circumstances interfered. But Mr. Henderson had no confidence in the "ignorant old savage," as he called him, and sent to Blue Earth County for his wife's parents, as he fully accepted the decision of Dr. Humphrey that she could not recover.

THE FIRST DAY OF THE OUTBREAK

About 6 o'clock on the morning of the 18th of August, four Indians came to Mr. Henderson's house. They shook hands with us, but somehow did not seem quite as friendly as usual. I gave them something to eat and they went away to the other settlers' houses in the neighborhood and looked into them, doubtless to see how many men were about. They went to the house of Mr. Jonathan W. Earle, where they were quite saucy and overbearing. One of them took down Mr. Earle's gun and was going off with it, when Mr. Earle took it away from him. The Indian said they were going to kill Chippewas and would return the gun, but Mr. Earle refused to let them have it, and they then went to the back of the house and sat down on a woodpile, as if for consultation.

Mr. Earle had his teams ready to haul hay. As they were about to start, his sons saw a number of Indians, about a mile out on the prairie, trying to catch some horses belonging to the settlers. Mr. Earle, with two others, started to stop them. The Indians told them they only wanted the horses to go on the war path against the Chippewas, and Mr. Earle found it was useless to interfere with them. Just as Mr. Earle returned to his house, a man named Voightman arrived with the startling news that the Indians had broken out and were killing all the whites at the Lower Agency. He said he had seen a num-

ber shot down before he had escaped, and had fled to Beaver Creek in the hope of getting his wife and children to Fort Ridgely.

The alarm soon spread throughout the settlement, and the men at once proceeded to take the women and children from their homes to the house of Mr. Earle. There were six families soon at the rendezvous, and it was decided that all should start at once to Fort Ridgely. At first I refused to go. I was not in the least afraid that the Indians would do me or my two little children any harm, but my husband's brother, David Carrothers, insisted, and the rest of the friends begged me to accompany them, and at last I consented.

We carried poor Mrs. Henderson, then almost in a dying condition, on a feather bed from her house to Mr. Earle's and laid her in a wagon. Our party had three wagons, the one containing Mrs. Henderson and her two children in the rear. The other women and children rode in the other two; the men walked alongside. The road to Fort Ridgely ran over the prairie.

Soon after we started, the four Indians who had been sitting on the woodpile watching our movements followed us and came close to the wagons. Then for the first time I realized that there was serious trouble. Very forcibly came to my mind the declaration of an Indian in my house about two weeks before: "We are going to kill all the whites in the settlement but you; you shall live with me and be my squaw." But as he had been drinking, I at the time paid no attention to what he said.

We had not gone more than half a mile when, to our horror, a considerable number of Indians—perhaps 75 in all—rose up out of the tall prairie grass and surrounded us. I was the only one in the company who could speak their language. I stood up in the wagon and asked the leader of the band what

they meant to do. He replied: "We are going to kill you all!" I knew he expressed their real purpose. I pleaded for our lives. I reminded them how I had always been their good friend; how I had lived among them for four years; that my children had been born among them and had been often carried to their tepees on the backs of their women; that I and my children loved the Indian people as we did our own. "Surely," I said, "you will not kill me or my children, when you all love us as if we were of your tribe. Why kill my friends? To take our lives can do you no possible good. If you shoot us down, like dogs, the Great Spirit will be very angry and will avenge our blood and bring woe and trouble to your nation."

The leader replied that he would like to spare our lives, but that all the whites must be killed. Then O, how earnestly, how piteously, I prayed to God to help us, and show us what to do.

Reader, do you realize our condition? We were utterly helpless, wholly at the mercy of those savage, blood-thirsty wretches. Alas, for the poor children! The older ones cried; my younger child blew kisses toward the chief or leader. The women seemed dazed, speechless, dumb with terror. The faces of the men wore a deathly pallor; their lips quivered; they stood as if petrified with horror, as they realized the outrage, the torture, the horrible doom which awaited the women, the merciless mutilation of their loved children, while they themselves were to be shot like dogs, without a chance of making resistance.

I made one more despairing appeal to the savages. I told them if they would let us go we would give them everything we had, and would never make them any trouble. Oh, with what passionate fervor I pleaded. At last they seemed to relent and consulted together, while every moment seemed to us an

hour of agony. Finally they agreed to let us go. They all came up to the wagons and seemed very friendly, shaking hands with all of us. I began to think we might be safe, and ventured to make an appeal to the chief to allow us to keep the team and wagon in which Mrs. Henderson was lying, so that we could take her to Fort Ridgely. He replied that he must have the horses, but that he would let us have the wagon, and then they unhitched the team. We then started on again, the men drawing the wagon containing Mrs. Henderson, and the other women and the children walking ahead of it. Hurriedly, eagerly, amidst hope and fear, we walked, or rather we half ran—the women with their babies in their arms, the older children clinging to their skirts, and all urging to greater speed.

We had gone but little over a mile. I was ahead of the company some thirty rods, when I was startled by hearing the Indian death song. Looking back I saw the whole band we had left coming after us, and heard the reports of three guns. The dreadful truth flashed upon me; the Indians were killing us! Several bullets struck the wagon. Mrs. David Carrothers, my sister-in-law, who was holding an umbrella over poor Mrs. Henderson, jumped from the wagon, two bullets passing through her dress before she reached the ground.

Poor Mrs. Henderson was excited into momentary strength by the deadly peril of herself and children, half raised herself and directed her husband to take the slip from her pillow and wave it toward the Indians as a flag of truce. The slip was held up by Mr. Henderson and David Carrothers, but was instantly riddled with bullets and the same volley shot off Mr. Henderson's thumb so that it fell to the ground and also mangled a finger so that it had to be amputated.

Mrs. Henderson fell back, fainting in the wagon,

and I feared she had been shot. Mr. Wegge went to her assistance and was shot dead as he leaned over the wagon. David Carrothers fled. Mr. Henderson cast one look of anguish and despair at his wife, broke from his little girl, who was clinging to him, and ran, leaping, crouching and dodging the bullets which whistled after him. He escaped and succeeded in reaching Fort Ridgely. The Indians murdered his wife and children, as I shall describe, and some days after General Sibley and his forces came to the fort. Mr. Henderson accompanied Capt. Grant's company on an expedition, sent out under Maj. J. R. Brown, to bury the bodies of the victims of the massacre. The charred remains of his wife and little girls were found and buried. That night the two companies of soldiers, Capt. Grant's and Capt. Anderson's and some citizens, went into camp on the Birch Coulee, and the next morning the Indians attacked them and Mr. Henderson was shot through the heart at the first fire; thus the entire family was exterminated.

With my children I was rushing on, when I stumbled into a slough. Realizing that escape was impossible I turned, and with an arm around each of my darlings, I stood awaiting my doom and witnessing horrors which, even now, forty-two years afterward, fairly appall me.

When the Indians came to the wagon where Mrs. Henderson lay, they seemed especially enraged against her. I have since believed that they were instigated in this feeling by the old medicine man I have mentioned, who took revenge for the insults and abuse which Mr. Henderson had heaped upon him. A word from him was all that was necessary to induce the warriors to indulge in their fiendish propensities. He was good to me because I pleased him and had proven a useful assistant to him in gathering and compounding his medicines, but the

tiger's nature, which slumbered in his breast, was aroused and the cruelty and treacherous, blood-thirsty destructiveness of his race manifested itself.

An Indian seized the older of the children, a sweet pretty little girl of but about two and a half years, and beat her savagely over the face and head with a violin box, mashing her head horribly out of its natural shape. Then he took the poor little thing by her feet and swinging the body around dashed her against the wheel of the wagon, the blood and brains spattering over the dying mother. Several times the wretch swung the body against the wheel and at last threw the crushed and mutilated remains into the wagon upon the body of the wretched mother.

Another red fiend caught up the nine-months-old baby girl, and holding her by one foot, head downwards, deliberately hacked the body, limb from limb, with his tomahawk, throwing the pieces at the head of Mrs. Henderson. Some of the Indians made a big fire and when it was burning fiercely they lifted the featherbed on which Mrs. Henderson lay, and tossed bed and woman and the mangled portions of her children into the flames. O, the horror of this scene! The dense smoke of the feathers of the bed and the burning human flesh, the yells of the Indians, the shrieks of anguish of those who witnessed the horror, and the groans of the poor woman! Those who passed through that scene of diabolical savagery cannot obliterate it from their memory. For myself, I stood paralyzed and dazed with horror. If life, safety and fortune would have rewarded my taking a few steps, I could not have stirred.

All this occurred in a few minutes, but to us women and children it seemed to last for hours. In agony and despair I awaited my turn to suffer, offering an earnest prayer that death to myself and little ones might come speedily. An Indian came running toward us. I thought my time had come. Putting

an arm about each of my little ones I wished that I could provoke the red fiend so that he would kill us outright. On his reaching me I was astounded to hear him speak in real friendly tones. He shook hands with me, but retained his grasp and soon removed my rings.

I said: "Are you going to kill me?" He answered "No, the medicine man says we must not kill you. He says I must save you and take you and your children to my tepee, and then you will be my squaw. All the nice women we will not kill; they will be squaws for the Indian braves."

There were 27 in our party when we started, and eight were killed by the Indians when they overtook us. I may here state that more than 800 whites were killed by the savages within a few days. Several counties in the western part of the state were depopulated and thousands of persons became fugitives and were left destitute without food or shelter.

Mrs. David Carrothers and her baby; Mrs. Earle and her two daughters, aged 13 and 7; Mrs. N. D. White and her baby daughter, Julia, and myself and my two children, a little daughter, Althea, aged 4, and a little son, Thomas W., of 2 years were put into two wagons by our captors and our journey into captivity began. The most of the men and boys escaped by flight.

We were started for Little Crow's village, on the south side of the Minnesota, two miles west of the Lower Agency. On reaching Mr. Earle's house the Indians halted, took from the house everything they wanted and broke up everything else, shooting the pigs and chickens. The same destruction was visited upon every other white settler's house that we passed.

After we had proceeded some distance we left the main road and started to cross the Minnesota river at a ford. While crossing the river one of the whif-

the trees of the wagon in which I rode became entangled in a wheel and I was ordered to unfasten it. I easily did so, but had to stand in the stream while at work and got wet to my waist. I was then ordered to take the lines and drive the team. Soon after we crossed the river we heard shooting, and as the Indians feared that the white soldiers were coming and would overtake us, I was ordered and compelled to drive as fast as possible. When we reached the crest of the bluff on the south side of the river the wagon containing Mrs. David Carrothers and child, Misses Julia Earle and Julia White separated from us and drove away towards Shakopee's village.

We reached Little Crow's camp about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and halted about 40 rods from the chief's house. I was ordered to unhitch the horses and go into a corn field and bring some corn to feed them. The Indian warriors and their squaws were coming into camp from every direction, the squaws laden with plunder, the men with the bloody scalps of their butchered victims at their belts. A great many white women and girls were brought in as captives.

About five o'clock Little Crow came over to see me and I asked him if I could not go either to his house or to the medicine man's tepee. I had previously asked the leader of the Indians who captured me to let me go to Little Crow's house, but he had angrily refused me, saying that I belonged to him. Little Crow told me that the medicine man had gone with the warriors to attack Fort Ridgely, but that I might go with him; so, with my children, I accompanied him to his house.

When we reached the chief's house I told him I was hungry and that my children had had nothing to eat all day. I had always fed him when he came to my house and I expected him to do the same by me. He became very cross. Pointing to a sack of

flour he said: "There is flour; if you are hungry, make yourself some bread," and then he left the house. One of his squaws came in and I told her that the poor children were very hungry, and she made us some coffee and bread. She told me that there were many white women captives and that they made a great fuss, crying a great deal, etc. She said the Indians did not like this and would kill the women if they kept up their crying, and would not be good to me if I cried. I knew that this was true and resolved to do my best to please them.

After we had eaten, my little boy was playing in front of the house. I stood just outside the door watching him, when Little Crow came and pushed me inside the door, telling me to keep inside of the house, out of sight of the Indians, or they would kill me. Of course I obeyed him.

Mrs. Earle, Mrs. White and I were now together, and as we were walking in front of Little Crow's house, we saw a white man walking some distance from us, and we went to him. We found it was Mr. Geo. H. Spencer, a clerk in one of the stores at the Agency. He was wounded in seven places and was the only white man in the camp at the time. The Indians dressed his wounds, and he was finally delivered to General Sibley at Camp Release when the other prisoners were rescued.

I soon began to fully realize what it meant to be a prisoner of the Indians, and to suspect the fate—far worse than death—which awaited me. Was there no way of escape? The Indian leader (whom the whites called John) who had made us captives now came and said his tepee was up and that we should all go with him. We did so, and on reaching his tepee we found his squaws outside preparing supper, of which we all partook. After supper Mrs. Earle was taken away and I did not see her again.

A squaw furnished me some blankets with which

to make a bed for my children and myself, and soon the little ones were sleeping soundly. Mrs. White and I remained together and sat up all night. The excitement in camp among the Indians was very great, and Mrs. White, who was a newcomer in the country and unaccustomed to their ways, was very nervous and alarmed. I did all I could to reassure her, remembering how I had suffered when I first saw a large number of the red fiends together, on my arrival at LaCroix's some years before.

Later in the evening Little Crow came in and told us that we must make ourself some clothing like that worn by the Indian women, and braid our hair like theirs. I talked with him about the uprising against the whites. He said he was determined to take back the lands of his people; that he would kill all the whites as far down the Minnesota valley as St. Peter, and then he would take possession of all the country north and west. I asked him about the soldiers of the Government and he said there were none left in Minnesota—nothing but women and old men; all the strong men had gone south to fight for the negroes.

As soon as he had gone a squaw brought in some blue broadcloth for our skirts and some calico for our waists and sacques. The squaw's costume at that time was not an elaborate work of art, like the fashionable dress of to-day. The skirt consisted of two yards of broadcloth simply made by sewing the two ends together. The extra fullness folded over the hips and was tied on with a scarf. The sacques or basques were made by folding a piece of calico together, cutting out a hole for the head to pass through, and another on each side to form the sleeve. The seam under each arm was all there was to sew.

Mrs. White sewed much faster than I could and got her costume done first, but was very loth to put it on; but I persuaded her that we had better do as the Indians wished us, for we had everything to lose

and nothing to gain by opposing or displeasing them. When we put on our new clothes we certainly cut ridiculous figures. The squaw was greatly amused and brought in other squaws and they all laughed very heartily at our appearance.

In the morning Mrs. White was taken away and I did not see her again. They put me at work and found plenty of it to do. I chopped wood, brought water, gathered corn from the fields and fed the horses, and all the time I was closely watched and never allowed to go alone, a squaw always keeping at my side.

Finally serious trouble threatened me. A squaw told me there was a great fuss among the Indians on my account. She said four braves claimed me, each for himself, and that the matter had been referred to Little Crow, but that he could not settle it or satisfy them, and so had ordered that I should be killed, for he would not have trouble among his best warriors on account of a white woman. I appealed to the squaw as a woman and a mother to help me and my children to escape, but she said "no," and that she would do nothing to help me.

When night came, however, and I was just about to put my children to bed, the squaw ordered me to take them and come with her to a corn-field. It began to rain hard and I objected to taking the children out, but she was very imperative and I had to obey her. When we got to about the middle of the corn-field she said I could remain there, and that the Indians were coming to kill me and the children. She ordered me to strip off my new Indian dress, saying it was "too nice" for me to be killed in. I positively refused unless she would fetch me some other clothing in exchange. Finding I was resolute, she returned to the tepee and came back with an old ragged skirt which had belonged to a white woman. I hastily made the change, and as the rain was now falling heavily she hurried off.

Then I resolved to make an effort to escape. I could but die trying. It was a forlorn hope, a desperate chance, for the Indians were encamped on both sides of the field and the growing corn did not reach above my head. But it was certain death to remain, and so I got down on my hands and knees, with the two children clinging to my back, and crawled away, making very good time under the circumstances. I soon heard the Indians in pursuit. I stopped dead still and they passed me. It was very dark, but I believed they would return and discover me.

Just then the storm came on with a terrific volume of rain and hail and the wind blew with the force of a cyclone. To the fury of that storm I and my children owe our lives. It prevented the Indian pursuit until I reached the timber along the bluff on the south side of the river. I knew that as soon as the storm abated they would follow on my trail, but would naturally suppose that I would hurry away and be as far off as possible, and so I concluded to keep not far from the camp for a time. I went down the bluff into the bottom and crawled through the high grass to the head of a body of water called Tiger Lake. Then I put down the children and returned over my trail to the bluff; then, walking backwards, I straightened up the grass after me until I reached the children. We spent the greater portion of that night on the wet ground.

During the night I was startled at hearing the Indians who were hunting for me. I suffered with fear lest one of the children would awake and make a noise. The mosquitoes were terribly bad, but fortunately both children slept soundly, although I had to take off my old skirt and cover them with it to protect them from the stings of the ravenous little insects that attacked us in great swarms and might cause the little ones to cry and thus betray our whereabouts to our savage pursuers. I now had scarcely any clothing and the mosquitoes swarmed over me so that they stung me

countless times on every part of my body; and yet I dared not move, fearing that my enemies were near and would hear the faintest noise I might make.

I think it was about 3 o'clock in the morning when the tortures inflicted by the mosquitoes became unendurable. I knew of but one way of getting relief, and that was to recross the river and get to my house, hoping to find there some clothing to cover me. I wanted a pair of shoes badly, for my feet were in a terrible condition from bruises and thorns. When the Indians made us women prisoners change our costumes they stripped us of all we had worn. The squaws promised to give us moccasins and leggings, but did not.

I wandered up and down the river bank looking for the ford, going down the stream until I knew I was too far in that direction, then returning went up stream until I was satisfied I was above the place I was seeking. At last I put down the children and bade them not to stir until I returned. Then I went to the edge of the timber to be certain where I was, and found that I was only a short distance from the Indian camp. I then returned to the children and for two or three days—I cannot now remember the exact length of time—we tramped about looking for the ford. When I would become utterly tired out I lay down in the timber and slept. The children slept a great deal. They cried but little, but constantly begged for something to eat. All I could give them was wild rice straw to chew for the juice, a few plums and berries, and some roots which I dug. There was plenty of water and I made a drinking cup by pinning two large leaves together with thorns.

I became nearly wild at my failure to find a fording place across the river. When I came to a place where it seemed probable that I could cross I would set down the children in a safe place and wade into the stream until the water reached my armpits; then return to

the shore and try another place. I did this again and again. Twice the little ones followed me to the bank of the river as I was trying the passage and cried because they feared I would drown. They seemed to know there was danger, and could not understand why I was wading in the water. I tried to make them understand that Fort Ridgely was on the other side and that we could not get home or have anything to eat until we crossed the stream.

At last I realized that we must have something to eat or we would die. So I started toward the Lower Agency and went up the hill or bluff out of the timber. The children were so weak they could walk but a short distance at a time, and I had to carry both of them, and this, in my weakened and harassed condition, I found very difficult. I took off my skirt and used it to tie my little girl on my back; I carried the little boy in my arms. I reached the road which led to the Agency and saw some Indians about a mile out on the prairie. Instantly I fled back into the timber, where I remained until after dark. I then went on to where the Agency had been and found that nearly all of the houses had been burned. Only one large house, the main Agency building, was left standing. I entered it and felt all around in the dark, hoping to find some kind of food, but there was none. There was some furniture which had escaped destruction and in one room I found a feather bed and near by was a trap door to the cellar. I threw the bed into the cellar and descended with the children. For one night at least we would sleep under shelter. I found a kettle and groped about until at last I found a spring. We had not had a good drink of water that day. I shut the trap door and soon we were asleep. Oh, the relief to pass a night under shelter! The mosquitoes had tortured us fearfully, and I had suffered so much altogether that I decided to stay there and die.

I remained in that cellar for three nights and two

days. At three different times the Indians came in and around the house. At the end of the time I was rested and the mosquito bites and the scratches and bruises I had received in wandering through the timber were healed, but the lack of food was telling on me, leaving me weaker every hour. I determined to make another effort to obtain food and to escape. I had found a few small potatoes in the garden and the children and I had eaten them raw. If I had had matches, I dared not light a fire. As I could not find anything more in the way of food, and as I could not find a ford where I could cross the river, I hoped I might be able to cross on the Agency ferryboat.

Very early on the morning of the third day after my arrival at the Agency house I started, and, with my little girl tied on my back and my boy in my arms, I soon reached the ferry, which was not far distant. On the opposite shore I saw a dreadful sight. It was here where Capt. Marsh and his 22 soldiers met their death in the ambushade, on the first day of the outbreak. Scalped and otherwise mutilated the bodies lay festering in the sun. I was greatly-disheartened when I found that the Indians had cut the ferry rope and let the boat drift away. In despair I wandered down the stream a few rods and suddenly, to my great joy, I saw a small boat on the south bank with the body of a dead soldier lying across the bow. The stench was fearful, but in desperation I pushed the body into the water after repeated efforts and bailed out the water in the boat with a tea cup which I had brought from the house, working with frenzied haste.

At last I had the boat bailed out, and placing the children in it and giving it a push I scrambled in myself and it was afloat on the river, although without oar or pole or anything to guide it. When we were well into the current the little craft began to leak fearfully. I worked desperately with the tea cup to keep down the water, but it gained on me rapidly.

How could I land the boat? Must we be drawn under after all our efforts and suffering? Fortunately we drifted near the north shore and I tried to reach the bushes and willows hanging over the river's brink. At last I caught some willows and succeeded in getting the boat ashore, although it was nearly half full of water.



THE AUTHORESS IN 1863.—From a Tintype

We were now on the north shore of the river which I had tried so hard to reach. I was greatly exhausted, and finding a place where some grape vines had run up and covered some bushes, I crawled under the shelter with the children and soon we were sound asleep. I awoke with fearful pains in every joint. The constant dread of the Indians and the expectation of hearing

the whizz of a bullet every moment, the pangs of hunger, the anxiety for my children, the long strain on my nerves, the hard struggles I had made all combined to prostrate me. It must be remembered that I was but 19 years of age and the mother of two children. With great effort I struggled to my feet, but only to fall to the ground. But after a time I remembered that I must not be very far from Fort Ridgely, my longed-for home of safety. If I gave up now all that I had endured had been in vain, and somehow strength was given me to make another effort to go on.

My way now lay through a dense jungle in the Minnesota bottom land of prickly ash, grape vines and underbrush so thick that in places I had to set down the children and open a pathway and then return for them. The poor little dears had become so weak that they were unable to walk, even for a short distance, and my own strength was so exhausted that I could not carry both of them at once, so that I had to carry one forward and lay it down and return for the other; then open up another path and bear forward my precious burdens as before. In working through the thickets soon again my hands and feet were torn and bleeding and my whole body, in my almost nude condition, was scratched and bloody. After many hours of this grievous effort I came out of the dense timber and underbrush to the open bottom land, covered with tall grass and weeds, and soon I was on the road leading from the Agency to Fort Ridgely.

On emerging from the timber I lay down so weak that my heart again failed me, and soon, as I think, fainted away; at least I was unconscious for some hours. But I was aroused and partially restored, perhaps by the cries of the children, and again tried to go forward. And yet I could only crawl on my hands and knees for a time, half dragging the children with me. Then by resting for a time I was able

to carry one of them forward for a time, as I had done when we were in timber. I was so glad that I was now in a road, for I had no obstruction to remove.

Night had now come and it would have been easy to travel had I not been so weak and exhausted, and of course there was danger from the Indians, who were still hovering about, watching the fort and garrison at Ridgely and occasionally intercepting and murdering a white fugitive that was trying to reach that place of safety. After taking a longer rest than usual I once again bound my little girl on my back with the remnants of my old skirt and carried my little boy in my arms. It seemed as if the poor little things had increased in weight. When I could walk no longer I crawled as before, but finally, in complete exhaustion, I fell and lay unable to move. I had lain in the road but a few minutes, when, turning on my side, with my ear to the ground, I heard the sound of approaching horses. It was the hoof beats of the Indians' ponies. In an instant fear lent me superhuman strength. I rose to my feet, seized the children, and rushed off with them into the high grass and lay down. The exertion must have caused me to faint, for when I came to myself the sun was shining and I had not even heard the Indians pass.

I now went back into the road and looking eastward I saw miles away over the prairie the tall flag staff of Fort Ridgely with the good old stars and stripes floating in the breeze! O, joy inexpressible! O, the ecstasy of delight which thrilled me at the gladsome sight! That flag meant hope, liberty, life, the salvation of myself and children. Hunger, pain, bruises, danger were all forgotten and I stumbled forward in an effort to walk. But I could not walk and carry the children, and so I had to crawl again. With great exertion and pain I dragged along until I came to an abandoned house, three miles west of the fort. At once I began to hunt for food, but my search was in

vain. I found a spring of water, which gave us great relief, for we had not had a drink for a long time.

While considering whether or not I ought to make another start, a white man came into the house where I was. At once he begged me to give him something to eat! He said that he had seen his wife and three children killed, and had fled, hoping to reach the fort. He had been at this house for three days. Every night he had tried to reach the fort only to find it surrounded by Indians and to be forced to return to the house. He had made a hole or a sort of retreat in a haystack into which he had crawled and hidden. He said the Indians came to the house quite often. I said: "Then this is no place to stay. We shall certainly be murdered if we stay here. Let us try to get to the fort. We can only be killed on the way at the worst." He was loth to go, but finally decided to accompany me and carried my little girl, which was a great help to me. We pushed on in the open road over the prairie in broad daylight, fearing every minute that we might receive a bullet. Some of the garrison in the fort saw us with field glasses when we were two miles away, but feared to venture so far out to assist us, because of the Indians who were known to be lurking about and who threatened the fort every night.

But when we were within half a mile of the fort, Lieut. N. K. Culver, of Company B, 5th Minnesota, three soldiers and Mr. J. W. DeCamp came out and met us. Mr. DeCamp supposed that I was his wife (who had been captured) until he was within twenty feet of us. Two of the soldiers were sent back to the fort to procure me some clothing. The old skirt which the squaw gave me in the corn field and which I had used to bind my girl to my back was ragged when I first got it and was now nothing but strips. All the covering I had was the band of the skirt buttoned about my waist. But soon a soldier returned with a

gray blanket, and in this I wrapped myself and soon made a joyous and triumphant entry into Fort Ridgely. We had not been in the fort half an hour when a large band of Indians came down directly over the road we had just traveled to within sight of the fort. They did not attack the fort, however, but passed by to the south, down the river valley.

It had been eight days since I left the Indian camp, and during that time I had eaten scarcely anything, although I had been walking, carrying both my children, and engaging in other fatiguing exertions a great part of the time. The distance from the Indian camp where I made my escape to Fort Ridgely was not more than eighteen miles "as the crow flies," and not more than twenty miles by the road; but by reason of my bewildered and half distracted state, I had wandered up and down and around and about, and in trying to keep in the shelter of the timber, and to find a ford for crossing over the Minnesota river, I had traveled in all perhaps sixty miles. During the eight days I had not eaten enough to make one good square meal.

The commanding officer of the fort, Lieut. T. J. Sheehan, who had bravely held this fort with his small force against the assaults of an overwhelming number of Indians, was most kind to me. He took me to the lady with whom he was boarding, told her we had been practically without food for eight days, and to give me and the children all we could eat.

I had hardly finished eating before I was taken very sick. My children, too, were badly affected. The surgeon of the fort, Dr. Alfred Muller, despaired of the life of my little girl. He gave us some medicine which afforded me a little relief. He said that we should have been given nothing but rice water at first and then small rations of other simple but nourishing food. He removed the thorns and splinters from my feet, applied lotions to the scratches and bruises, and put court plaster on some severe cuts on my body, and

for all of his help I was very grateful. The day after my arrival I was unable to stand because of my sore feet. But I was greatly worried at the condition of my little girl. On the third day, finding that she continued dangerously sick, I insisted on getting up and going outside of the fort to search for the proper plants, herbs, and roots which I knew the old medicine man would use in such a case. I was lucky in finding what I needed and compounded some medicine which I administered to my poor little darling and took myself. Dr. Muller pooh-poohed at my efforts. He had told the commanding officer that there was no hope for the child; that she had been starved and exposed to the rain and wet and other dangers; that she had not the strength of the mother and little boy; that the hearty meal of coarse, indigestible food which she had eaten on an entirely empty stomach after so long a fast had done the work, and that nothing could save her from death. To his astonishment the next day the child was evidently much better, and in three days, though still weak, she was playing about the fort. She rapidly regained her strength, and in one week from the time she had taken the remedies which the old medicine man had taught me to use she was well, and I too had recovered, although it took months to recover from the fearful mental strain which I had undergone.

Mrs. Jones, the wife of Sergt. John Jones, and the lady to whom the commanding officer took me, gave me a dress, one of hers, consisting of a waist and skirt. The waist fitted me very well, but the skirt was rather short, as Mrs. Jones was short in stature, while I was inclined to be tall. However, I felt very comfortable in my new clothes, as they were much better than anything I had had for several days.

When I reached Fort Ridgely I found that besides the garrison there were about 200 fugitives there, chiefly women and children. The men of the garrison were covering the roof of the commissary building

with earth. During the attacks the Indians had set it and other buildings on fire with fire arrows, and the dirt coverings were being put on to prevent further danger from this source.

The day after my arrival at the fort passed without any attack from the Indians. About daylight on the following morning a cry was heard from the lookout stationed on the roof of the high barracks building that horsemen were approaching on the St. Peter road. The warning sent a thrill of anxiety through all hearts, as we did not know whether the horsemen were friends or foes. However it was not long until Col. Saml. McPhail, at the head of a body of hastily organized citizen cavalry numbering about 150 men, rode into the fort and was greeted with the wild hurrahs of its inmates. The following day Col. Sibley came with his artillery and about 1,000 men, and among them was my husband. We then had nothing to fear from the Indians.

The arrival of these forces overcrowded the barracks, and in order to relieve the situation I and some others went to a house a few rods outside of the main collection of buildings which constituted the fort. Here we cooked our rations and feeling secure, with so many soldiers near us, decided to spend the night in comfort. Just as we had lain down to sleep on the bare floor we heard the report of guns. The Indians were firing on the pickets. As we could not open the door, we raised a window and began crawling out, intending to return to the barracks. When we were all out except Mrs. Valencia J. Reynolds an officer came and ordered us to remain where we were, as, if we ventured out, we might get shot. So we went back into the house and sat near the window, fearing every moment that we might see an Indian crawling in.

During the night one of the women, a girl who had worked at Dickinson's boarding house, at the Lower Agency, and who had left us earlier in the evening,

found that there was scarcely standing room in the barracks and so concluded to return to us. She had taken off her hoop-skirt and the first thing we saw was that hoop-skirt, doubled up, coming through the open window. In the darkness and in our excited condition we thought it was an Indian with tomahawk and scalping knife! Neither Mrs. Reynolds nor I spoke a word, but seizing the girl by the hair we dragged her in and began pounding her. It was some time before she could make us understand that she was not an Indian, and from the rough reception we gave her I presume that for a time she thought we were Indians.

The next morning we had a good breakfast of coffee, rice and beans; for dinner we had beans, rice, coffee and hardtack. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon we were ordered out on the parade ground of the fort. An officer rode past and counted us. Soon after a team drove up to where I and others were standing and we were ordered to get into the wagon until it was filled and then drive around the barracks and halt, and wait the arrival of another wagon similarly loaded, and so on until all the refugees were provided with transportation and the wagon train was ready to start for St. Peter and the country below. We were to have a mounted escort with us. I told the officer in charge that I was sick and not able then to make the journey, but he insisted that I must go and ordered some men to help me into the wagon and they did so.

The wagon-master, or man in charge of the train, Mr. B. W. Smith, was then ordered to start for St. Peter and not to halt until we reached that town, a distance of about 40 miles from the fort, as the road then ran. Just before we started a soldier came to me and said: "You and your children look sick. I have a bottle of paregoric which I will give you. It may come handy before you get to your destination." Another soldier gave me a canteen of water, another

a loaf of bread, and another a "U. S." army blanket, and some one else, either a citizen or a soldier, gave me a bed quilt.

There were thirty-seven teams (citizens' wagons) in all. We drove until about midnight, when it became so dark that we could not keep our train together and we lost two teams. We had been ordered to turn to the left at a certain place, but the two teams mentioned lost the trail and turned to the right. So the wagon-master ordered a halt right in the middle of the road until the teams joined us at daylight. I was quite comfortable, for I had a blanket, a quilt, bread and water, and also the paregoric. At about 3 o'clock in the morning we again moved forward, and at about 8 o'clock came to a farm house, where three or four soldiers had gone ahead of the train and gathered potatoes and onions and cooked a wash boiler full of each, and as we drove by we were each handed a potato or onion. As I had two children I received as my share one potato and two onions, and so with my bread and canteen of water I fared very well.

At about 10 o'clock in the forenoon we arrived at St. Peter, where we had dinner. We then started for St. Paul, and were two nights and a part of three days on the road. We stayed one night at a farm house and the neighbors came in to see "the woman who had been a prisoner among the Indians." One woman gave me a sun bonnet, another some stockings, and another some old shoes. Here I began to realize what a ridiculous figure I had been presenting—bare-headed, without shoes or stockings, and with a dress which scarcely reached to my knees.

The next day we reached St. Paul and Mr. Smith, the man who had been in charge of the wagon train, put me on board a steamboat and, accompanied by my husband and children, we started for LaCrosse, Wis., where my parents lived. The captain of the boat was very kind to me and did not ask me to pay for my

passage. Some of the lady passengers gave me clothing for my children. A collection was taken up for my benefit.

I am sure that Mr. Smith will always be gratefully remembered by every one of the refugees in the train for his vigilant care and faithful kindness for us while we were under his charge. When he turned me and



B. W. SMITH

The Wagon Master in Charge of the Refugee Train

my children over to the captain of the steamboat, it was his thoughtful and kind proposition which led the captain to secure for me among his passengers a handsome and substantial collection to which I have referred and which was afterwards of much service to me and my little ones.

In two days after leaving St. Paul I reached the home of my parents. After all I had endured how great was the joy of again seeing their dear faces! They had given up all hope of ever seeing me again, believing that I had shared the fate of hundreds of others and perished in the dreadful massacre. We reached my parents' home about the 1st of September and I remained with them the following winter. I had been exposed so long and had such a dreadful mental strain that my health was not very good, and during the winter all my hair came out. It was many months before I regained my former strength.

In April following (1863) we removed to St. Paul. My husband worked as pattern maker in a foundry and I boarded the men who worked with him. We lived in St. Paul but two months and then removed to St. Peter. After my capture by the Indians there was discord between me and my husband, and at St. Peter we "agreed to disagree." I went to work for Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, who kept the Northwestern Hotel in St. Peter, and he returned to Wisconsin and that fall enlisted in a cavalry regiment from that State and went South.

I remained with Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds at their hotel for two years, and again returned to my parents, who in the meantime had removed to Dodge County, Minn. Here I became acquainted with a Mr. McNaney, a young man from Michigan, and in October, 1869, we were married. Upon our marriage we removed to Brainerd, Minn., where we opened a hotel, which I conducted, while my husband, who was a lumberman, engaged in the lumber business.

We lived in Brainerd for seven years and then removed to Bismarck, North Dakota. That winter my husband hauled freight to the Black Hills and the following spring took contracts in building portions of the Northern Pacific Railroad. I accompanied him while he was engaged in this work and we camped

out. While removing from point to point in that then wild and unsettled country we frequently came upon herds of buffalo and antelope.

After two years of railroad construction work my husband was taken seriously ill and died in Montana. I was again alone in the world with three small children to care for. At first I went to cooking at Glendive, Montana, for the locating engineers of the Northern Pacific and was so engaged for a year. I then removed to Billings, Montana, where I bought a lot, on which I built a house, and cooked for the paymaster and his clerks of the Yellowstone Division of the Northern Pacific. When I left Billings I came to Minneapolis and engaged in dressmaking, but after a year or so I opened a boarding house which I conducted for several years and then removed to Portland, Oregon. I was there for seven months and then went to Tacoma, Wash., where I again opened a boarding house. I was twice burned out while on the Pacific coast. I returned to Minneapolis for a short visit, but finally went to my old home in Dodge County, and in November, 1897, I was married to my present husband, L. H. Tarble, and have since lived on a farm four miles from Dodge Center.

I hope these few pages may be of some interest to the reader and impress upon the minds of the rising generations the character of the hardships which the early pioneers of Minnesota had to suffer.

Respectfully, etc.,

MRS. HELEN M. TARBLE.

CHARACTER OF THE RED MEN'S REBELLION

In order to properly present the most tragic epoch in the history of Minnesota to those unacquainted with its true character, a brief account ought perhaps to be given of the conditions of the country at the time and of the general nature of the tragic events, and I submit the following in connection with the story of my personal experience:

In 1858 Minnesota, now and for many years past the foremost State of the great Northwest, took her place among the fair sisterhood of the States of the Union with as fair prospects as any other commonwealth that ever entered the glorious American confederacy. A tide of hardy, vigorous, industrious and intelligent emigrants had rolled into the country from the older States and from Germany, Scandinavia, England, Ireland and Canada. By the year 1862 a thriving population of more than 200,000 was in the State. Minnesota was then a beautiful land. Her salubrious climate, her crystal lakes, her wooded streams, her bewitching waterfalls, her island groves and her lovely prairies would have added gems to an earthly paradise. Her Lake Superior, her Mississippi, Red River of the North and Minnesota were inviting adjuncts to the commerce of the world. Her abundant harvests and her fertile and enduring soil from which they sprung gave to the husbandman the highest hopes of prosperity. Her position in the track of the human current sweeping across the continent to the Pacific coast and thence around the globe placed her forever on the highway of nations.

Thus situated, thus lovely in her virgin growth, Minnesota had but one dark spot on her fair bosom. The dusky savages dwelt within her borders, and

when all else was peace, without a note of warning, that one dark spot, moved by the wind of savage hate, suddenly obscured the cloudless sky. A vial of wrath was poured upon an innocent and unsuspecting people. Like a storm of thunderbolts from the clear, bright heavens a volume of savage murder rolled over the land, day and night, until the victims numbered nearly one thousand. All classes perished, from the gray-haired grandsire to the infant of a day, and their mangled remains strewed the land, and the dead were left to bury the dead, for death was over the land.

Practically within two days, except in small remote settlements, the murderous work was done. During these two days a population of 30,000, scattered over several counties in the western part of the State near the Minnesota river, were dispersed. On horseback, in wagons drawn by oxen or horses, on foot, under the momentum of a great panic the people fled wildly over the prairies to places of safety, some to Fort Ridgely, but more to the eastern towns on the Minnesota and the Mississippi. Flight from an invading army of civilized forces is dreadful in its nature, but flight from uplifted tomahawks in the hands of savage fiends, in pursuit of unarmed, defenseless men, women and children, is too terrible to be described.

The unarmed men of the settlements offered no resistance, or practically none, to their merciless assailants. Indeed they could not resist, for by far the majority of them had no guns or other weapons. They could only flee before the savage hordes, each in his own way, to such places of refuge as the instincts of self-preservation prompted them. Some sought shelter in the nearest sloughs or ravines; others crawled into the tall grass, in many instances hiding in sight of the foe, and many of these were followed and butchered; others were overtaken and killed when they were in sight of safety. Children of tender years, beaten, hacked and bleeding, fled from

their natural protectors, who in many cases had been killed or were disabled, and by the aid of the trail of blood, or by the instincts of nature, crawled by night and day from the line of fire and smoke in their rear toward Fort Ridgely or toward some distant town or settlement.

In that dreadful time, if one could have looked down from the clouds, he would have seen a human tide of thousands of fugitives, of both sexes and all ages, in all possible plights. The rear ranks, maimed, bleeding and faint from exertion and the loss of blood, were continually falling into the merciless hands of their inhuman pursuers keen and fierce on the trail. A human eye could not endure to see such a scene. It was one over which the angels in the realm of peace might weep. Human imagination cannot color the picture beyond the reality. If the readers of these pages could have seen the situation as I saw it, they would not deem the horrible descriptions given by others overdrawn or exaggerated. With my own eyes I saw murders committed, the mangled remains of dozens of victims killed elsewhere, the scene of ruin and devastation, and yet I saw only a small part of the whole scene. I know that all descriptions in the stately forms of language are cold and fall far short of the reality of that dreadful massacre.

During the time that the State's relief forces under Col. Sibley were being marshaled and sent up to St. Peter the greater portion of the Minnesota valley above was being laid waste by robbery, fire and murder. The people who were permitted to escape the first onslaughts were fleeing like frightened deer. The town of New Ulm, after having been attacked and besieged for several days, several of its citizens killed and many houses burned, was utterly deserted. Other towns were partially deserted and many settlements entirely abandoned. Sometimes fugitives coming from the frontier took the places of those in

localities farther eastward who had gone still farther toward safety.

Many did not stop until they reached St. Cloud, or Minneapolis, or St. Paul, and indeed many left the State, some of them never to return, sacrificing their homes and all the property they possessed. The fugitives came in sore distress. They had been unable to bring anything with them; they were without food; had but little clothing, which was always ragged and torn; they were foot sore, sick and completely disheartened.

The sorrows and sadness of the dreadful event cannot be depicted. How indelibly are its memories impressed upon the very souls of mothers who were bereft of their children by savage barbarity. What bitter tears fell from the eyes of the scattered army of helpless children who were reduced by the cruel hands of the savages to a life of cheerless orphanage. How many lingered for months, and sometimes for years, awaiting in vain the return of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, or dear friends, whose loved forms lay shriveling and bleaching, and perhaps never again seen by mortal eyes. Such scenes are only harrowing, and it is not to be wondered at that many refuse to contemplate them, and that those who witnessed them strive to completely forget them.

INCIDENTS OF THE INDIAN UPRISING.

In the few days of the Minnesota Indian massacre of 1862 there perished, by actual count, 868 men, women and children. There were of course many other victims whose remains were never found. The soldiers and citizens killed and mortally wounded in combat with the Indians are not included in the above estimate, nor are those who died from exposure and other privations while fleeing to places of

safety. The value of property destroyed was over \$1,000,000.

The reason for the absence of historical notice of the massacre in the books of the time is, that the massacre occurred at an important period of the War of the Rebellion, when all public attention was given to that stupendous conflict. The cries of the victims of the Minnesota massacre were lost in the thunders of the battles of the Second Manassas, South Mountain, Antietam and Perryville, and the smoke of the savage burnings in our young State was obscured by the powder clouds of a score of other southern battlefields.

The massacre really commenced on the morning of August 18, 1862, at the Lower Indian Agency, which was located on the high bluff bank of the south side of the Minnesota river, about 110 miles due west from St. Paul. The river at this point was crossed by a ferry. Word went to Fort Ridgely that the Indians had broken out and killed many people at the Agency, and Capt. Marsh, the commander of the fort, started with his company for the scene, and, as I have stated, was ambuscaded at Redwood Ferry that afternoon, and he and 23 of his men were killed, the Indians losing but one man. A monument marking the scene of this battle was recently put up by the late Hon. C. D. Gilfillan.

About four miles northwest of the former Redwood Agency is the battlefield of Birch Coulee. Here on September 2 and 3, 1862, occurred one of the most gallant incidents in our country's military history. A white force of 150 volunteers and citizen soldiers was surrounded in camp by an overwhelming force of Indians and fiercely attacked. The desperate nature of the attack and of the defense may be partially understood from the fact that the tents of the whites were so riddled with bullets as to be practically worthless, and that all of the 75 horses

but one were killed, and that 24 whites were killed and more than 50 wounded. The Indians were driven off the second day by Gen. Sibley's relieving force from Fort Ridgely.

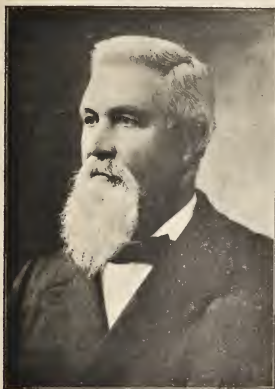
My home was six miles from the Lower Sioux Agency, up the Minnesota river, and about a mile north of that stream, near where now stands the town of Beaver Falls. I had lived on a quarter section of government land for four years prior to the outbreak. During the first year I had no white neighbors near me; my only associates were the Indians. My little home was very humble, but it was very dear to me. As I have said, it was built of logs, with a puncheon floor and a bark roof. There was but one small room. There was but one doorway and one small window, with six panes of glass. The door was made from the boards of a dry goods packing box. It was warmed by a cooking stove. But the location was pleasant and the associations connected with it gave it a peculiar interest to me.

FORT RIDGELY AND ITS GALLANT DEFENSE.

Fort Ridgely was about eighteen miles from my home, and was on the north side of the Minnesota. The fort was established on the eastern part of the Indian reservation as quarters for troops to preserve order on the reservation. Before the War of the Rebellion a small garrison of regular troops was stationed here and several pieces of cannon were kept. Many of the officers stationed at Fort Ridgely, from time to time, became distinguished leaders of both the Union and Confederate armies during the war. The fort was not a fortification proper. It comprised a collection of houses about a square or parade ground and there were no earthworks.

When the war broke out the regulars were taken away and Minnesota volunteers formed the garrison. It was a mile from the river, on the prairie, at the

crest of the bluff, and its water supply was a big spring under the bluff. Strange to say no well was dug on the site until in 1896, when plenty of good water was found at a little more than twenty feet. The fort was only intended as a post for the quartering of troops. It was badly situated for defense in case of an attack. A deep, wooded ravine ran up on



COL. T. J. SHEEHAN

Commander of Fort Ridgely During the Siege and Investment of 1862

— Photo by Zimmerman. St. Paul

each side of it, and when the Indians attacked it they came up these ravines within easy rifle range of the buildings. The houses were mostly frame buildings and easily set on fire, but the commissary and main barracks building were of stone. At the time the Indians came there were stables and stacks of hay near the fort, and these the commander of the fort had burned by bomb-shells.

From the 19th of August the fort was commanded by Lieut. T. J. Sheehan, of Co. C, 5th Minnesota. The garrison was composed of that company, of that portion of Company B remaining after the slaughter at Redwood Ferry, and a newly organized company of recruits for the Union Army called the Renville Rangers, and some citizens—the most of the latter being without fire-arms—in all about 150 men. The Renville Rangers were chiefly from Renville county and were on their way to Fort Snelling to be mustered into the volunteer service, when, at St. Peter, they heard that the Indians had broken out and procuring some old muskets in the town they returned as rapidly as they could to Fort Ridgely. Some of the members of this company were mixed-blood Indians, and four of these deserted to the Indians from Ridgely, telling them just how the fort was situated. Lieut. Sheehan was then a young man, 24 years of age, but a very brave and skillful officer. He determined to hold the fort to the last, and if possible save the lives of its inmates, the most of whom were women and children. How well he did his work history tells.

There were two heavy attacks on Fort Ridgely. The first was on Wednesday, August 20, when the Indians suddenly appeared and drove in the outer guards and kept up a hot fire on the fort for some time. They were repulsed, but continued to surround the place. The second attack was on August 22, when a very large force came down and made determined efforts to take the fort. A well-known Indian, named Good Thunder, and another warrior counted the force that came from the Lower Agency on this occasion and reported that there were 800 warriors in the line. They attacked and charged in great force, chiefly from the south and southwest, towards the Minnesota river, where the stables were, but the garrison fought so bravely that the savages

were repulsed. Three cannon under the general charge of Sergt. John Jones, an old regular soldier, helped largely to defeat the assaults.

Little Crow was the leading spirit among the Indians in this attack. He seemed to realize that his hope of success in the war lay in his capturing the place. If he succeeded he would secure many pieces of cannon, scores of muskets and a large lot of ammunition, and besides there was nearly \$70,000 in gold and silver coin, which was intended for the Indian payment and which reached the fort the day of the outbreak, August 18. His first assault failed and he ordered a second, which might have succeeded but for the fact that just as the Indian column, which came up the ravine to the southwest, was about to dash upon the opening made by the southwest entrance, Sergt. McGrew, in charge of a large cannon, poured a heavy load of grape and cannister among them, and Dennis O'Shea's gun did likewise, and the soldiers poured in a volley, and the result was that the Indians had 17 men killed and many wounded, and were thrown into a panic and retreated. They could not be induced to charge again, but sullenly retired, followed by shot and shell from the cannon. Then they laid regular siege to the place, surrounding it with a line of skirmishers, until Gen. Sibley's relieving force came and raised the siege, as I have related. As I have stated I was only inside the fort one day when the relief came.

Lieut. Sheehan had all his men constantly under arms, and before the first assault was made had no time to construct any breastworks or other defenses, or to destroy the buildings outside of the main fort. The stables were set on fire and burned by shells from the cannon the day of the first assault, but not before the Indians got some horses and mules from them and used them for defenses.

The magazine of the fort, where the ammunition

was stored, was a log building which stood on the prairie some twenty rods outside of the main buildings. But a small amount of ammunition had been carried into the fort when the attack came on the first day. Men were detailed to take the remainder into the stone barracks building. The gallant fellows ran out under the Indian fire and performed their perilous duty most nobly, working under fire until nearly all the ammunition was safe. Luckily not a man of them was killed.

The whites had but four men killed, while the Indian loss was probably not more than 25 killed and several more wounded. A fine monument commemorating the defense of Fort Ridgely, and bearing a portrait of Lieut. Sheehan and the names of the defenders, men and women, was erected by the State in 1896. Many women helped in the defense by making cartridges, caring for the wounded, etc.

THE HANGING OF THIRTY-EIGHT INDIANS AT MANKATO.

I have stated that shortly after the battle of Wood Lake, Sept. 23, 1862, nearly all of the white prisoners that had been in the hands of the Indians were given up by their captors to Gen. Sibley and his little army. At the same time a large number of Indians surrendered themselves, and a few days later several were captured by detachments of troops sent out through the country. Little Crow, at the head of the main force of Indians, escaped to Dakota, and as Gen. Sibley had no mounted men they could not be pursued with any chance of their capture.

Gen. Sibley at once put all of the captive warriors under guard, and soon after a military commission was organized for their trial on charges of murder, robbery and other crimes. This commission was in session for a considerable time, and after hearing a

great mass of testimony and giving all of the red rascals a fair trial, found 303 of them worthy of death and sentenced them to be hung. The finding and sentence had to be approved by President Lincoln before taking effect. The martyr President's kindly nature was worked upon by the members of the "Indian Rights Association" and others, and he was made to believe that the commission had been too severe in its findings. He ordered that all the papers and records of the proceedings of that commission be reviewed by the legal department of the Government. The result was that this department reported to the President that only 39 of the 303 condemned savages had been proven, by positive and direct evidence, to be deserving of death. The sentences of those convicted on circumstantial evidence were commuted to imprisonment for different terms of years.

At a public meeting of citizens of the Minnesota valley held at Mankato, December 3, a series of resolutions were adopted, demanding of the President the speedy execution of all the condemned savages (who were then in prison at Mankato) and protesting against the Indian Rights Association, the Quakers, and others in Eastern States in attempting to prevent the execution. The President's decision to hang but 39 was commented adversely upon, the resolutions declaring that if the President adhered to his decision and established such an unwise precedent, "we hope that our State courts will properly dispose of the remainder of the condemned." But these resolutions and the protests of the Minnesota members of Congress had no effect to change the decision.

December 17, Col. Stephen Miller, then commanding the post at Mankato and having charge of the Indians there, issued "Special Order No. 11," as follows:

"The President of the United States having directed

the execution of thirty-nine of the Sioux and half-breed prisoners now in my charge, on Friday, the 26th inst.—he having postponed the time from the 19th inst.—said execution will be carried into effect in front of the Indian prison at this place on that day, at 10 a. m."

For the better preservation of order on the day of execution, the citizens of Mankato requested Col. Miller to declare martial law in the town and vicinity, which he did, also prohibiting the sale of liquor to the enlisted men.

On Monday before the execution the 39 condemned Indians were confined in a separate apartment from their companions and their death warrants read to them in English by Col. Miller and interpreted in Sioux by the old missionary, Rev. S. R. Riggs. During the reading very little emotion was manifested by the Indians, although each of them listened intently, several of them composedly smoking their pipes during the ceremony. They were then confined in a back room on the first floor of Leach's store building, chained together in pairs, and closely and strongly guarded.

The night before the execution a special order was received by Col. Miller postponing the execution of one of the condemned, an old Indian named Ta-tay-me-ma, or Round Wind. It had been certainly ascertained that this man was innocent, he having taken no part in the outbreak. He had been condemned on the testimony of two boys, who had mistaken him for another old man who had helped kill their father and who escaped with Little Crow.

All during Thursday night and up to the hour of the execution people were constantly arriving at Mankato to see the hanging. The streets were densely crowded with soldiers and citizens the most of the night. In the morning a sand bar in the Minnesota river, the opposite bank of the river, and all the

available points from which the scene of the hanging might be witnessed were crowded with spectators. The troops present, all Minnesota volunteers, were 200 men of the 6th Regiment, under Lieut. Col. Averill; 425 of the 7th Regiment, under Col. Miller; 161 of the 9th Regiment, under Col. Wilkin; 325 of the 10th Regiment, under Col. Baker; 35 of Captain White's mounted men, and 273 of the 1st Regiment of Mounted Rangers; total, 1,419.

The gallows, which were constructed of heavy square timbers, were located on the level tract opposite the military headquarters, covered an area about twenty-four feet square, and were about twenty feet high. The "drop" was held by a large rope attached to a pole in the center of the frame.

Friday morning, December 26, 1862, the 38 red savages paid the penalty for their crimes on the scaffold. They were taken from the prison with their arms tied. Some of them were painted in savage fashion and all wore blankets or shawls about their shoulders. They were conducted to the scaffold between two files of soldiers stationed along the route. Eight men, one to each section of the platform, were detailed to act as executioners, and two men armed with axes were placed ready for any emergency. Upon reaching the gallows the Indians readily ascended the steps and took their places, each under his respective noose, and nearly all the full bloods began singing their death songs. The half bloods were silent, as were some of the full bloods who had become converted to the Christian faith.

When all was ready, Maj. Joseph R. Brown, who acted as signal officer, beat three distinct strokes on a drum. At the third stroke Mr. J. Duly, one of the mounted scouts at the time, but who was one of the survivors of the Lake Shetek massacre, and whose wife and children were still prisoners with the Indians, cut the main rope. At once the drop fell and

all of the wretches but one were suspended and struggling in the fatal nooses. In the case of the single exception the rope broke and he fell to the ground, but his neck had been broken and he was soon strung up again. The majority died easily, but a few struggled and writhed violently in their death agonies. As the drop fell loud cheers went up from the spectators, both soldiers and citizens.

When all signs of life had disappeared the bodies of the victims were cut down and under an escort taken in wagons to the burial place, which was a low flat between the river and Front street.

The remainder of the prisoners, who had been sentenced to imprisonment, were taken to Davenport, Iowa, and placed in confinement. A number of the Indian women, among whom was one of Little Crow's wives, accompanied them as nurses, cooks, etc., and shared their captivity.

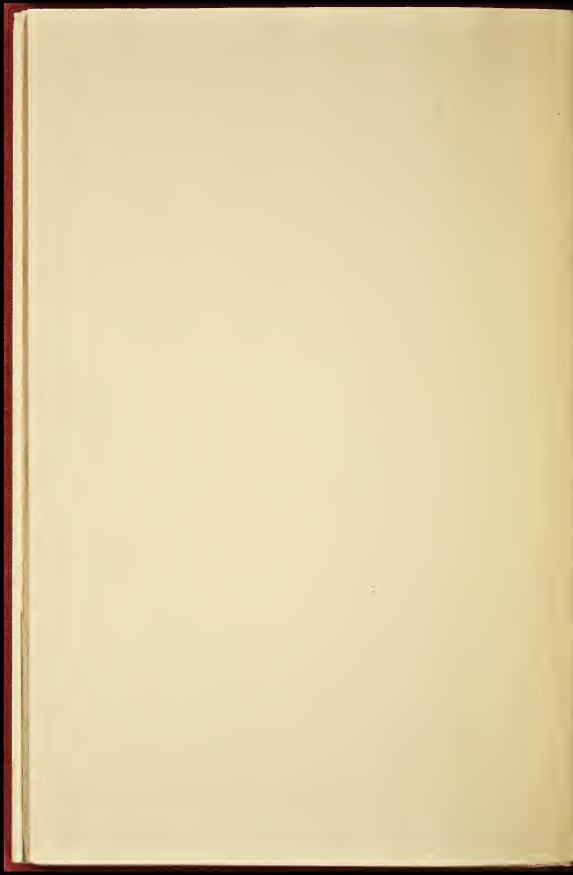
The other Indians, including the families of the prisoners, the "friendlies," etc., were kept under guard at Fort Snelling for some months, and in the spring of 1863 taken over on the Missouri river, at the mouth of Crow creek, in South Dakota, at a military post called Fort Thompson, and were here kept under guard or surveillance for a considerable time. Of these Indians it may be said that when they left Fort Snelling they numbered in all 1,324, chiefly women, children, and old men. They were put on board of two steamboats, one of which stopped at Hannibal, Mo., and transferred its human freight to the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad, over which the Indians were taken to St. Joseph, Mo. The other boat went down the Mississippi to the Missouri and then up that river to St. Joseph, where the other detachment was waiting, and then it too was crowded on board and the boat proceeded to Crow Creek. The voyage from St. Joseph to Crow Creek occupied twelve days. Within six weeks after reaching Crow

Creek about 150 of the Indians, chiefly women and children, died, and within six months more than 200 had died. During the summer of 1863 a number of Winnebagoes from Blue Earth county joined the Sioux at Crow Creek. Both tribes complained greatly of their treatment at Crow Creek, or Fort Thompson. The post was called for the superintendent, Clark Thompson, a Minnesota man. (See the U. S. Indian Commissioner's Report for 1867.)

In the early spring of 1866 President Johnson, upon the recommendation of the military authorities, Rev. S. R. Riggs and other Minnesotians, pardoned all the Indian prisoners then in confinement at Davenport. Previously, from time to time, some thirty or more of them had died in prison and quite a number, captured the previous winter, had been added to the original force.

April 10, 1866, under orders from the Secretary of the Interior, the Indians, 247 in number, including some women and children, were taken from the Davenport prison by E. Kilpatrick, special agent for the Government, and under a military escort in command of Lieut. Mitchell, 3d U. S. Infantry, who was at the time commander of the post at Davenport, were put on board the steamboat Pembina and conveyed to St. Louis. On the way one Indian died and was buried in Pike county, Mo. The boat reached St. Louis April 12 and the Indians were transferred to the steamer Dora (or Cora) under another escort commanded by Maj. Dickey, 13th U. S. Infantry, and taken up the Missouri river to St. Joseph. Here another special agent, Jedidiah Brown, took charge of them and accompanied them up the river to Crow Creek. (See Indian Commissioner's Report for 1866.) From time to time after their arrival at Crow Creek the released Indians joined their families on the reservations in Nebraska and Minnesota. A few of the survivors are now living in Minnesota.





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